

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-02 SS-15 NSC-05 PA-01

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O R 241930Z FEB 75

FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2196

INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE RIO DE JANEIRO 0604

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, BR

SUBJ: PAN AM REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF GUAGE

REFS: -) STYLES/FERRER TELECON OF FEBRUARY 21, 1975;

B) RIO DE JANEIRO 0564

1. SUMMARY: CONGEN DELIVERED AIDE MEMOIRE TO BRIGADEIRO CALDOS SANTOS AS INSTRUCTED REF A. LATTER STATED HE COULD TAKE NO ACTION GIVEN AIR MINISTER'S RECENT DECISIONS REPORTED REF B. PAN AM, STATED, COULD NOT INITIATE CONGONHAS OPERATIONS. IF USG WISHES PURSUE THIS ISSUE, HE ASSERTED, IT SHOULD PRESENT DIPLOMATIC NOTE TO ITAMARITY. END SUMMARY.

2. AS INSTRUCTED IN REF A, CONGEN OFFICER PREPARED AND PRESENTED AIDE MEMIRE, TEXT OF WHICH SUBMITTED BY SEPTTEL, ON REF SUBJECT TO BRIGADEIRO CALDAS SANTOS OF CERNAI LATE AFTERNOON FEBRUARY 21, 1975. CALDAS SANTOS READ AIDE MEMOIRE AND QUICKLY COMMENTED THAT HE COULD TAKE NO ACTION GIVEN AIR MINISTER'S DECISIONS REPORTED REF B. IMPLEMENTATION OF INTENDED PAN AM CHAGE OF GUAGE, HE STATED, IS IMPOSSIBLE UNDER CURRENT SITUATION. IF USG LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WISHES ISSUE TO RECEIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION FROM GOB,

AND SPECIFICALLY FROM CERNAI, HE RECOMMENDED THAT US EMBASSY PRESENT DIPLOMATIC NOTE TO ITAMARITY, WHICH WOULD FORWARD NOTE TO AIR MINISTRY. CALDAS SANTOS OPINED THAT SUCH CONSIDERATION, AND PROBABLE SUBSEQUENT BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS, COULD TAKE CONSIDERABLE TIME.

3. AS MEETING PROGRESSED, CALDAS SANTOS STATED THAT GOB, FOR OPERATIONAL REASONS, HAS NO INTENTION OF PERMITTING ANY ADDITIONAL FLIGHTS INTO CONGONHAS. IF WORSE CAME TO SORSE, HE STATED, VARIG WOULD HAVE TO CEASE ITS INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AT CONGONHAS, POSSIBLY MOVING THEM TO RIO DE JANEIRO. CONGEN OFFICER AGAIN EXPLAINED USG VIEW THAT CONGONHAS IS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AND THAT BRAZIL HAS OBLIGATION UNDER TERMS OF BILATERAL TO GRANT US CARRIER EQUAL ACCESS. CALDAS SANTOS RESURRECTED ARGUMENT THAT CONGONHAS IS "REGIONAL" RATHER THAN "INTERNATIONAL" AIRPORT.

AS TO SUGGESTION THAT SOME BRAZILIAN AIRLINE OPERATIONS MIGHT BE SHIFTED FROM CONGONHAS TO VIRACOPOS TO ACCOMMODATE PAN AM, CALDAS SANTOS STATED THAT GOB COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO MOVE NATIONAL AIRLINE "INTO THE STREET" TO MAKE ROOM FOR FOREIGN COMPANY.

4. CONGEN OFFICER SUBSEQUENTLY MET WITH PAN AM OFFICIALS. LATTER HAD ALREADY AUTHORIZED HEADQUARTERS TO FERRY B-727 TO RIO DE JANEIRO, BUT CANCELED THIS AUTHORIZATION UPON LEARNING OF RESULTS OF CONGEN OFFICER'S MEETING AT CERNAI.

5. CALDAS SANTOS PHONED CONGEN OFFICER MORNING OF FEBRUARY 24 TO ASK ABOUT REPORT THAT PAN AM HAD REQUESTED AUTHORIZATION TO FERRY B-727 TO BRAZIL. WHEN INFORMED THAT FERRY OPERATION HAD BEEN CANCELED, HE EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE RELIEF. HE THEN PROCEEDED TO EMPHASIZE THAT AIR MINISTER, HAVING TAKEN PUBLIC DECISION ON CONGONHAS, COULD NOT POSSIBLY RETRACT HIS STATEMENT IN ORDER TO AUTHORIZE ADDITIONAL FLIGHTS INTO CONGONHAS. VARIG AND OTHER BRAZILIAN CARRIERS, CALDAS SANTOS CLAIMED, HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO CEASE THEIR INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AT CONGONHAS ASAP. IF NECESSARY, HE ASSERTED, FURTHER PRESSURE MAY BE PLACED ON COMPANIES TO ACCELERATE THIS PROCESS. ISSUE OF "CHANGE OF GAUGE", HE ACKNOWLEDGED, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IS CLOSELY LINKED TO QUESTION OF PAN AM ACCESS TO CONGONHAS.

GOB BELIEVES DIFFERENCE OF OPINION OVER FORMER ISSUE MUST BE RESOLVED FIRST. IN FACT, HE STATED, BY TIME CHANGE OF GAUGE ISSUE IS RESOLVED, CONGONHAS ACCESS MAY BE ACADEMIC SINCE AIRPORT WILL PRESUMBLY HAVE BEEN CONVERTED INTO PURELY DOMESTIC FACILITY. IN SUCH CASE, HE ADMITTED, GOB MAY NOT OBJECT TO "CHANGE OF GAUGE" IF PAN AM WILLING

TO OPERATE INTO VIRACOPOS.

6. FYI. CALDAS SANTOS FORCEFULLY INSISTENT THAT PAN AM USE OF CONGONHAS IS IMPOSSIBLE. GOB APPARENTLY PREPARED TO ENTER INTO EXTENDED CONSULATATIONS IN ORDER TO DELAY RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE UNTIL CONGONHAS HAS BECOME DOMESTIC FACILITY. IT APPEARS UNLIKELY USG COULD PRECIPITATE QUESTION IN SUCH MANNER AS TO OBTAIN CONGONHAS ACCESS FOR PAN AM. MORE REALISTIC USG POLICY MAY BE TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON GOB IN ORDER TO EXPEDITE ELIMINATION OF VARIG INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS AT CONGONHAS. IF THIS OBJECTIVE ACHIEVED, AND PAN AM DESIRES INTRODUCE CHANGE OF GUAGE FOR VIRACOPOS, THIS OBJECTIVE MAY ALSO BE OBTAINABLE. WITH THESE OBJECTIVES IN MIND, DEPT., IF IT ACCEPTS NEGATIVE ORAL RESPONSE FROM DAC TO PAN AM AS OFFICIAL GOB RESPONSE TO COMPANY'S FILING, MAY WISH CONSIDER IMMEDIATELY PROVIDING EMBASSY BRASILIA WITH TEXT OF FORCEFUL DIPLOMATIC NOTE FOR PRESENTATION TO ITAMARITY. STRENGTHEN THIS APPROACH, AND TO EMPHASIZE USG CONCERN OVER THIS ISSUE, DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIAL FROM BRAZILIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON.

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